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Tetrapartite Discusses Integration of Science in Agriculture and Agri-food

Tetrapartite 2009 is an annual meeting involving heads of the public research organizations in United States (US), France, United Kingdom (UK) and Canada. It includes: the United States Department of Agriculture's Research Service (USDA-ARS); France's National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRA); the United Kingdom's Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), and Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC); the Scotland's Rural and Environment Research and Analysis Directorate, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. This year's meeting was held in Aberdeen, Scotland, from June 21st to June 24th, 2009. The meeting included a country update and discussions on two scientific topics, land use and food research for policy making. The Canadian delegation included Dr. Marc Fortin, Dr. Yvon Martel, Dr. Christiane Deslauriers, Dr. Joyce Boye and Dr. Mark Stumborg. Of interest this year to research managers was the planning for priorities using foresight initiatives and the integration of research partners into an innovation system. Countries are looking at best combination of public, university and private research to ensure integration of science and efficient delivery of results to stakeholders.

The host country this year, Scotland, under the leadership of Maggie Gill, Chief Scientist Advisor, Scottish Government, highlighted their excellent science capacity in agriculture and agri-food and contributed to the success of the Tetrapartite 2009.

Contact: Yvon Martel

The Bio Circle Project: Mid-term Meeting

The BIO CIRCLE Project was launched in October 2008 to stimulate cooperation from all over the world in the 7th Framework Programme, Theme 2, (Food, Agriculture and Fishery and Biotechnology) of the European Commission (EC). BI0 CIRCLE is co-ordinated by the Agenzia Per la Promozione Della Ricerca Europea, (APRE) in Rome, Italy, and has 24 partners including Canada, New-Zealand and Australia. The main focus of the project is the identification, sharing and implementation of good practices between the European National Contact Point (NCP) Network and the Third Countries National Information Point (NIP). The First Mid-Term Meeting was held in Rome on May 25th and 26th and included a «brokerage event» where each delegation presented their organization, their national research priorities, their Centres of excellence, the fields where international cooperation is crucial for their country as well as their respective action plan within the BIO CIRCLE Project. The Canadian delegation representatives were Dr. Yvon Martel, Chief Scientist International, Mrs Nathalie Corbeil, International Event Officer, Mrs Carole Morneau, Chief Liaison Officer, Science and Trade, all three from AAFC. For Canada, the action plan includes the upcoming activities:

- Eastern Canada, October 2009 : An Info Day on the 7th Framework Programme for Canadian science managers and research scientists;
- Europe, date to be announced : A first brokerage event in Europe with invited Canadian research scientists;
- Eastern Canada (Ottawa), October 2009 : A National Round Table with EC representatives and Canadian managers and research scientists;
- Western Canada, (Saskatoon) November 2009 : A second Info Day on the 7th Framework Programme for Canadian science managers and research scientists;
- Europe February 2010: A second brokerage event in Europe with invited Canadian research scientists.

The Canadian delegation and the BIO CIRCLE team represented by Mrs. Diassina Di Maggio, director, APRE, and by Mr. Ben Kubbinga and Mrs Chiara Pocaterra, project managers, APRE, were able to discuss and plan the upcoming initiatives to be held in Canada and in Europe this year in the course of this project.

Further information is available on the web site: http://www.biocircle-project.eu

Contact: Carole Morneau

Senior Managers EU-FP7 Discuss Twinning Cooperation with Canada

Carole Morneau, Diassina Di Maggio, Ben Kubbinga, Chiara Pocaterra, Yvon Martel and Nathalie Corbeil

On June 29-30, 2009, a bilateral meeting was held in Ottawa with the European Commission (EC) and various Canadian agencies and departments to discuss scientific cooperation under Theme 2 of the 7th Framework Programme which includes food, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and biotechnology research. The meeting reviewed the progress made on agriculture and food research over the last two years and discussed expanding the cooperation to fisheries, forestry and biotechnology and other possible scientific areas of interest. In their opening remarks, Dr. Marc Fortin, ADM, AAFC, and Dr. Timothy Hall, Head of Unit and acting Director for the Directorate-General Research, EC, acknowledged the tremendous progress made between AAFC and EC on scientific cooperation and the very successful use of the twinning concept.

Line Matthiessen, Piero Venturi, Carole Morneau, Yvon Martel, Timothy Hall, Gintare Kemekliene and Alfredo Aguilar

Contact: Yvon Martel

Science is a Value-Added to the Canada-Italy Trade Cooperation

Mr. Marco Valicenti is the AAFC Market and Industry Services Branch, (MISB) Agriculture Counsellor in Rome, Italy. In a meeting in Rome with Dr. Yvon Martel, Chief Scientist, International, AAFC, on May 26, 2009, Marco Valicenti expressed enthusiasm about enhancing science and trade opportunities between Canada and Italy. Italy has a large public science capacity with ten research centres and about 500 researchers. In addition, industries are interested in helping dissemination of research to companies. Overall, Italy is the lead on the European Technology Food Platform and their main priorities are animal production, genomics on grape and wheat. As next steps, Marco believes that visits of senior research managers and the organization of roundtables in Italy would provide an opportunity to identify areas and projects of cooperation that would benefit science and trade between the two countries.

Marco Valicenti and Yvon Martel.
Contact: Yvon Martel

Hungary: an Eastern Europe Country Interested in Canadian Agriculture Research

On May 26th and 27th 2009, the Canadian delegation, Dr. Yvon Martel, Chief Scientist International, Mrs Nathalie Corbeil, International Science Event Officer, Mrs Carole Morneau, Chief Liaison Officer, Science and Trade, and their counterparts Mrs. Carole Glynn from the Facilitating Research cooperation between Europe (FRENZ), New-Zealand, and Mr. Jean-François Devignes-Hicks, from the Forum for European Australian Science and Technology (FEAST). Australia, attended a two day training-visit in Budapest organized by Mrs. Dora Groo of the Hungarian Science and Technology Foundation (TETALAP). This initiative permitted to members of the three delegations to meet with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Agricultural Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Science, and the Campden & Chorleywood Hungary, one of the leaders in the Hungarian National Food Technology Platform.

Discussions and exchanges on current best practices in each country facilitated an opened dialogue between the participants that will lead to integrated initiatives and a stronger international scientific cooperation within the 7th Framework Programme Theme 2 - Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology.

During an additional meeting held on May 27, 2009, between Dr. Yvon Martel, and Mr. Gergely Morvai, Trade Commissioner at the Embassy of Canada in Budapest, it was indicated that agriculture production in Hungary had similarities with the Canadian situation. Hungary produces durum wheat, corn, maize, pulses and potatoes. The Trade Commissioner indicated that Canadian companies, such as Semex, are active in Hungary as well as Pulse Canada. Mr. Morvai was quite interested to know more about the agriculture research capacity in Canada and the potential cooperation on projects of mutual benefits. Other participants to the meeting were Mrs Nathalie Corbeil, Mrs Katalin Kalai from TETALAP and Mrs Jennifer L. Orange Rosebrugh, Senior Trade Commissioner, Embassy of Canada, Budapest.

Nathalie Corbeil, Katalin Kalai, Gergely Morvai, Jennifer L. Orange Rosebrugh and Yvon Martel.
Contact: Yvon Martel

Western Australia Minister Participates in a Roundtable with AAFC

The Honourable Terrry Redman, Western Australian Minister for Agriculture and Food, Forestry, and Minister Assisting the Minister for Education, attended a roundtable meeting in Ottawa organized by the Market and Industry Services Branch and the Research Branch, on July 13, 2009. Other members of the delegation were Ms. Melissa Fransen (First Secretary, Australian High Commission); Mr. Scott Mitchell (Chief of Staff to Minister Redman); and Dr. Mark Sweetingham (Acting Executive Director Research, Department of Agriculture and Food - Western Australia). The Minister would like to further build the Western Australia (WA) agriculture and food industry's capacity to adapt and grow, to improve market access for WA produce and promote a positive profile of their food and agriculture sectors. The Minister's key areas of focus for this visit were mainly: biofuels, risk management tools and biotechnology, government's programs to support

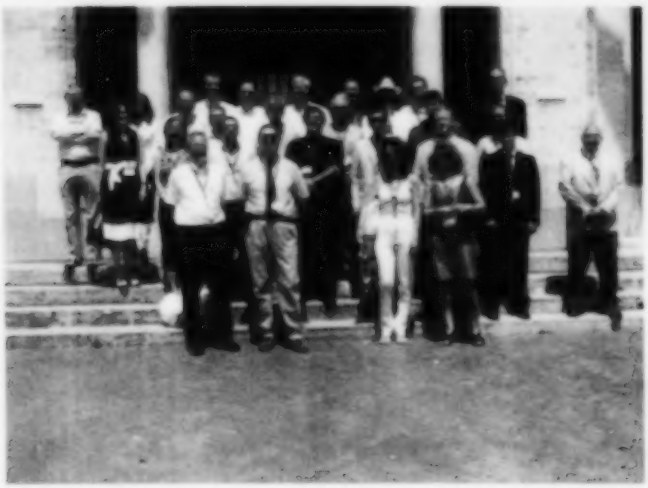
industry, climate change adaptation and trade policy. Dr. Yvon Martel, Chief Scientist, International, AAFC, and Ms. Inge Vander Horst, International Market Development Officer, AAFC, accompany the delegation for a tour of the research facilities on the Central Experimental Farm.

Inge Vander Horst, Melissa Fransen, Scott Mitchell, Terry Redman, Mark Sweetingham, and Yvon Martel
Contact: Yvon Martel

The Second EC-Canada Workshop on Biorefineries Moves Cooperation

The second European Commission - Canada Twinning Workshop on biorefineries took place in Pisa, Italy on June 15-17, 2009. This follow-up workshop was built on the relationship established in the first workshop held in Montreal on February 18-19, 2008. Eleven FP7 (Seventh Framework Programme) projects from the European Commission and ten Canadian projects (five from ABIP and four from Genome Canada [Prairie Genome, Genome Alberta]) were presented and discussed through a series of bilateral. Researchers actively participated in the bilateral discussions that resulted in planned activities of benefit to both parties. Cooperative interactions generally will take the form of visits for information exchange and training; exchange of materials and methodology; joint participation in the planning of workshops, meetings and new projects. At the meeting wrap-up, Dr. Alfredo Aguilar, head of Unit biotechnologies, EC, and Dr. Stephen Morgan Jones, DG Partnership, AAFC, indicated that they would enter into further discussions to hold a symposium in Canada in a year from now.

Contact: Benoit Girard



European Commission-Canada Second Workshop on Biorefineries, Pisa, Italy, June 2009

Research Branch Assists Market and Industry Services Branch at the Canada-Turkey 7th Annual Conference on Business Opportunities

The Canadian-Turkish Business Council (CTBC), its counterpart the Foreign Economic Relations Board and the Government of Canada organized a multi-sectoral business mission to the Republic of Turkey May 10-13, 2009. The Canadian delegation was lead by Louis Lévesque, Deputy Minister of International Trade and Mark Bailey, the Canadian Ambassador to Turkey. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada was represented by Malcolm Forbes, Market Development Officer, Market and Industry Services Branch (MISB), and by Dr Alister Muir, Research Scientist, Bioproducts and Bioprocessing, Research Branch (RB). Their presentation promoted the Canadian advantage and the role of science in the Canadian approach to food safety, quality and innovation. This presentation was timely as Turkey is in the process of harmonizing its food regulations with that of the European Union (EU). This represents a significant opportunity for Canadian companies, especially those who provide expertise on good management practices and compliance with regulations, and have experience working with SME's. Turkey has also become a full member of the Strategic European Framework for International S&T Cooperation. Dr Muir also traveled to the Tubitak Marmara Research Center at Gebze to visit the Food Institute. Researchers at this institute are receiving significant amounts of research funding from the 7th Framework Programme and other EU programs and are very interested in developing collaborative research projects with Canadian scientists.

Participants to the 7th Canada-Turkey Conference on Business Opportunities, May 12, 2009

Contact: Alister Muir

Quick Visit of a New-Zealand Delegation

A New Zealand delegation, composed of Mrs. Lesley McConnell, S&T Counselor for USA and Canada, New Zealand Ministry of Research, Sciences and Technology, and of Dr. Jimmy Suttie, General Manager, Head of the Biotechnology department, AgResearch Limited (www.agresearch.co.nz), has made its way from Montreal to Vancouver. The first meeting took place on Monday, July 27th 2009 at the Food Research and Development Centre of St-Hyacinthe and was welcome by Dr. Christian Toupin, Research Manager. A seminar took place with Dr. Gabriel Piette, Science director, Food Safety and Quality, Mr. Steve Bittner, Senior Advisor, Commercialization & Business Development, and Mr. Philippe Painchaud, Coop student from l'Ecole Nationale d'Administration Publique. After a short visit in Ottawa on July 28th, the delegates took off to the Saskatoon AAFC Research Centre on July 29th where they were hosted by Dr. Paul McCaughey, Research manager and where they met - in person and by video conference - specialists in animal nutrition and genetics from the universities of Saskatoon and Edmonton. They also visited the AAFC Genebank facilities. The visit ended in Vancouver with the presentation of the dairy program affiliated with UBC-Agassiz.

Themes such as commerce and technology transfer have been frequently discussed at the meetings. Dr. Suttie also emphasized on New Zealand priorities, such as sustainable production in pastoral environment, application of technologies in the processing sector, growing dairy industry productivity, meat production, etc. This visit brought interesting discussions between the parties, providing further knowledge on each country's perspective in agriculture science.

Christian Toupin, Gabriel Piette, Lesley McConnell, Steve Bittner, Jimmy Suttie and Philippe Painchaud
Contact: Johanne Boisvert

Two Research Scientists Visible on the International

At the Tetrapartite meeting held in Scotland, in June 2009, two Canadian research scientists contributed to the discussions related to policy-making on land use and food research for US, Canada, France and UK. Dr. Joyce Boye, Research Scientist, Food Safety and Quality at the St-Hyacinthe Food Research and Development Centre, showed how research can support the development of the pulse industry in Canada and can contribute to the growth of the agriculture and agri-food sector. Dr. Mark Stumborg, Section Head, Bioproducts and Bioprocesses at the Semiarid Prairie Agricultural Research Centre in Swift Current, made a presentation entitled "Canadian Land Use and Biomass Impact Assessment". He showed how a program called biomass inventory mapping and analysis tool, can assist in developing Canadian sustainable system for food and non-food production. Through their excellent presentations, both research scientists contributed to the discussions among participating countries on how research can help developing policies in food and land use.

Mark Stumborg and Joyce Boye
Contact: Yvon Martel

A Fruitful Collaboration on Nitrogen Fertilization Sustainable Management

Dr. Nicolas Tremblay, a scientist at AAFC and a specialist of crop and soil fertility management, has established a fruitful and eye-opening collaboration with the Agronomy College of the Henan Agricultural University (ACHAU) in Zhenghou, Henan province, China. A "mirror" experimentation in both countries has pointed to an important over fertilization in a corn field in China that threatens the environment and the profitability of the farming operations. At the difference of the plots established in L'Acadie, Québec, the crop grown in a commercial field in Xun County, did not show any response to increased amounts of applied nitrogen. The presence of high available nitrogen in the soil likely explained this situation. Indeed, before sowing, in L'Acadie, the nitrogen measured was 35 kg N/ha in the 0-90 cm horizon compared to 415 kg N/ha in the field in China, only in horizon 0-30 cm. The tests will be repeated in 2009 and soil samplings will be conducted in all Henan Province to check how widely spread is the problem of high amount of mineral nitrogen in the soil at the beginning of the growing season. This collaboration between Dr. Tremblay and his ACHAU colleagues is related to the transfer of diagnostic tools for sustainable management of applied nitrogen in crops.

Nicolas Tremblay, Xiangwen CHENG, Chaohai LI and Tongbao LIN
Contact: Nicolas Tremblay

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